

Status of the Claims:

1-21. (Canceled).

22. (Currently Amended) In a system comprising a packet switched data network bridging a first telephony network and a second telephony network, call setup across said first and second telephony networks being implemented with an out of band telephony signaling protocol, a method of performing call setup through the packet switched network for a call originated at said first telephony network toward said second telephony network, comprising the steps of:

~~implementing call setup across said first and second telephony networks with an out of band telephony signaling protocol, and~~

at an interface for said first telephony network in said packet switched network, receiving information on resource status in the second telephony network; and

when said information on resource status indicates that resources are available in said second telephony network to complete setup of the call therein, implementing call setup within for the call through said packet switched data network with a separate call signaling protocol, there being no communication path for the call through the packet switched data network prior thereto

~~wherein said step of implementing call setup within said packet switched data network is carried out after information on a resources status in the second telephony network is available.~~

23. (Original) The method of claim 22 further comprising a step of transmitting call setup messages from said first telephony network to said second telephony network with said out of band telephony signaling protocol.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23 wherein said out of band signaling protocol is SS7.

25. (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein said step of transmitting call setup messages comprising sending an IAM (Initial Address Message) from an origination point signaling controller of said first telephony network to a termination point signal controller of said second telephony network.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25 further comprising a step of sending an ACM (Answer Complete Message) from said termination point signaling controller to said

origination point signaling controller, confirming that said second telephony network is capable of taking the call.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26 wherein said ACM is sent by said termination point signaling controller after said call setup in said second telephony network is successfully implemented.

28. (Original) The method of claim 26 wherein said separate signaling protocol is H.323.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28 further comprising a step of sending an ARQ (AnswerReQuest) or equivalent from an originating gateway of said packet switched data network to said origination point signaling controller, and, a step of sending, in response of said ARQ, an ACF (AnswerConFirm) from said originating point signaling controller to said originating gateway.

30. (Original) The method of claim 29 further comprising a step of sending, from said originating point signaling controller to said originating gateway, an indicator indicating that said call is headed to an SS7 network.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30 further comprising a step of holding said ACF at said originating gateway, waiting for a confirmation that said setup in said second telephony network is successful before starting said step of implementing call setup within said packet switched data network with H.323 protocol.

32. (Original) The method of claim 31 further comprising a step of sending said confirmation from said origination signaling controller to said originating gateway, upon receipt of said ACM at said origination signaling controller.

33. (Original) The method of claim 32 wherein said step of implementing call setup within said packet switched data network with H.323 protocol is started upon said originating gateway's receipt of said confirmation.

34. (Original) The method of claim 32 further comprising a step of sending a release message from said termination point signaling controller to said origination point signaling controller if said termination point signaling controller cannot take said call, and upon receipt of said release message, said origination point signaling controller selecting another termination

point signaling controller.

35. (Original) The method of claim 22 further comprising a step of determining, at said origination point signaling controller, whether to transmit call setup messages to a potential termination point signaling controller by said out of band telephony signaling protocol or by said separate protocol.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22 wherein the first and second telephony networks are PSTNs (Public Switched Telephone Networks).

37. (Currently Amended) A communication system, comprising

a first PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network);

a second PSTN; and

a packet switched data network connecting the first PSTN to the second PSTN,

wherein the system is operable to:

implement call setup across the first and second PSTN networks with SS7 telephony signaling protocol,

at an interface for said first telephony network in said packet switched network, receive information on resource status in the second telephony network

when said information on resource status indicates that resources are available in said second telephony network to complete setup of the call therein, implement call setup within the packet switched data network with a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) call signaling protocol, there being no communication path for the call through the packet switched data network prior thereto

wherein the call setup within said packet switched data network is carried out only after information on a resources status in the second PSTN network is available.

38. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 37 wherein the VOIP protocol used for implementing call setup in the packet switched data network is H.323 protocol.